

COVER SHEET

RESPONSIBLE FEDERAL AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Fossil Energy

COOPERATING AGENCY: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management

TITLE: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Imperial-Mexicali 230-kV Transmission Lines

LOCATION: Imperial County, California

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ABSTRACT: A U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Presidential permit is required to construct, operate, maintain, and connect an electric transmission line across the U.S.-Mexico border. On February 27, 2001, Baja California Power, Inc., InterGen Aztec Energy, V.B.V. (hereafter referred to as InterGen), filed an application with DOE, Office of Fossil Energy, for a Presidential permit for a double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line extending from the Imperial Valley Substation in California for a distance of about 6 mi (10 km) to a point west of Calexico at the U.S.-Mexico border. The line would connect at the border with a similar line being built in Mexico. In a separate but similar proceeding, Sempra Energy Resources applied to DOE for a Presidential permit on March 7, 2001, for a 230-kV transmission line that would parallel the proposed InterGen line and connect with a similar line being built in Mexico. The lines for both projects would traverse land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), a cooperating agency in preparing this EIS. For both of these projects, the applicants propose to use the international lines to connect to separate power plants, each about 3 mi (5 km) south of the border and located approximately 10 mi (16 km) southwest of Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico.

Because these projects would be located in essentially the same place, DOE and BLM elected to consider both in the same EIS. DOE published its Notice of Intent on October 30, 2003 (68 FR 61797). DOE and BLM held public scoping meetings on November 20, 2003, in El Centro and Calexico, California. The Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS was issued on May 14, 2004 (69 FR 26817). DOE and BLM held public hearings on July 14, 2004, in El Centro and Calexico, California. DOE gave the public until July 30, 2004, to comment on the Draft EIS.

DOE and BLM have prepared this EIS to address the environmental impacts of the proposed actions and the range of reasonable alternatives, including the "No Action" alternative. DOE and BLM will use the EIS to ensure that they have the environmental information needed for informed decision making. The decisions will be issued in the form of Records of Decision by DOE and BLM no sooner than 30 days after publication of the Notice of Availability of this Final EIS.